



**Brandon M. Scott**  
*President*  
Baltimore City Council

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October 16, 2019

Mayor Bernard C. “Jack” Young  
100 Holliday Street, Room 250  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Dear Mayor Young:

I write today concerning our shared commitment to providing adequate funding for Baltimore’s schools and their infrastructure. In preparation for the impending winter, we must work to ensure our young people do not miss instructional time due to a lack of adequate heat in their school building.

As recently as last month, 49 schools had to be closed for the day due to lack of air conditioning. According to Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPSS), approximately 60 of our public school buildings lack air conditioning. Furthermore, heating is an even bigger obstacle to student learning, with students losing more days of instruction due to lack of heating than to lack of air conditioning.

I know you recognize the importance of this issue and share my commitment to our students. I therefore noted with interest the Quarterly Budget Briefing on September 26, 2019 presented to the Baltimore City Council’s Budget and Appropriations Committee. During its presentation, the Department of Finance’s Bureau of Budget and Management Research noted the City of Baltimore faces a \$34 million budget surplus. This comes after several supplemental appropriations passed by this Council after the close of the last fiscal year.

Given the acute nature of the need, I urge you to assign this anticipated \$34 million surplus to Baltimore City Public Schools as an initial contribution toward BCPSS’s Air-Conditioning Plan. I understand this amount is unaudited and may decrease, and that this contribution would only supplement, and not supplant, the City’s normal contribution. The total estimated cost of the updated plan to install vertical package units is as follows: \$54,120,000 to \$67,650,000. The suggested contribution of \$34 million is just over 50% of the high end of that range.

There will always be urgent, competing fiscal constraints governing our budget, but it is imperative the City contribute to these much-needed infrastructure upgrades. This is a small, but necessary step towards more robust investments in our youth.

Sincerely,

Brandon M. Scott  
President, Baltimore City Council